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ABSTRACT

This study presents a 5-year pattern of data for the Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS) program at Mendocino College, with particular focus upon the persistence and performance of the fall 1995 cohort of EOPS students. EOPS is intended to serve students with economic and/or educational challenges to achieve their highest potential, and to support their progress toward degree and certificate goals. The current requirements for participation in EOPS include California residency, at least 12 units of credit, qualification for the Pell Grant or AFDC (TANF) assistance, non-high school graduate or non-GED achievement, basic math and English deficiencies, low high school GPA, non-native English speaking family setting, or Hispanic or Native American ethnicity. Included are two tables presenting participation and financial information for Mendocino College EOPS between the 1991-92 and 1995-96 academic years. The demographics of the program indicate that an increasing number and proportion of minority students--particularly Hispanics--have been successfully recruited to Mendocino College because of the program's presence. EOPS students are by definition "high risk." These students are supported not only by direct financial assistance, but by a number of peer- and professionally-led programs and services available on campus, most notably the Learning Center, the Re-Entry Program, and the specifically focused ethnic student organizations and services of the college. (AS)

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Research Report 98 - 15

1991-92 to 1995-96 Mendocino College EOPS Student Demographics, Persistence and Performance

September, 1998

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JC 990 431

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Research Report 98 - 15

1991-92 to 1995-96 Mendocino College EOPS Student Demographics, Persistence and Performance

Background:

Mendocino College regularly describes the general traits of the student population to track the changes over time, and to assess the impact of those changes upon programs and services. Among the special programs and services offered is the Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), intended to serve students with economic and/or educational challenges to achieve at their highest potential, and to support their progress toward degree and certificate goals. The current requirements for participation in EOPS include:

1. Residency - California
2. Enrollment - 12 or more units of credit
3. Income - qualified for Pell Grant or AFDC (TANF) assistance.
4. Educational - non-HS grad or non-GED; assessments indicating Basic Skills deficiency in Math or English; Non-Native English speaking family setting; First generation in college attendance; low HS GPA.
5. Racial-Ethnic - Hispanic or Native American

Substantial portions of the full-time student population at Mendocino College have qualified under the state guidelines for EOPS. The Director of Special Services, Mr. Oscar DeHaro, has established a data base system to maintain records of the EOPS student population over the past decade, on the basis of which it is possible to discern changing patterns of student characteristics among those students served. This report includes a five-year review of the characteristics of all EOPS students, drawn from the Mendocino College EOPS database. In addition, the report evaluates student retention and academic performance for those students initially served by EOPS in the Fall semesters of 1991 through 1995.

Findings:

Program Participation and Finance:

Tables 1 and 2 present participation and financial information for Mendocino College EOPS between the 1991-92 and 1995-96 academic years. The percentage of EOPS-served students has varied over the years in comparison to total Full-time student enrollment. Participation in EOPS has remained fairly constant within a range of 200 – 250 students in the last five (5) years; however, the decline of total full-time students in 1997-98 placed the percentage of EOPS students above 30% for the second time during the time-period of the study. When in 1995-96 the number of total full-time students increased, the proportion of EOPS students declined proportionately. The Cooperative Agency Resources for Education (CARE) program participation significantly increased during the five (5) year period. Table 2 expresses the relationship of EOPS awards in comparison with the total number of financial aid applications processed. Over the ten-year period, the number of applications processed by the Financial Aid Office increased from a low of 860 to a high of 1085. A difference of 26.16%. Greater flexibility in the award of EOPS funding has resulted in a generally lower total award during the five (5) years, with the average assistance reaching about $750 in 1995-96.

Demographics: The distribution of Mendocino College students by gender changed significantly constant during the investigation period, with about 69% Female and 31% Male by 1995-96. The distribution more closely approximated the total student population by the end of the study period. Table 4 shows the pattern of EOPS service by Racial-Ethnic status of students. Over the five-year period, minority students have accounted for an increasing proportion of the EOPS population, with approximately 35% of the EOPS population being comprised of minority students in the most recent years. There was a statistically significant increase among Hispanic students participating in EOPS over the five-year period. The accompanying chart represents the contrast between 1988-89 and 1997-98 in a more visual perspective. One anticipated outcome of EOPS at its inception under SB164 (Alquist) was to encourage a greater participation in higher education among historically disadvantaged minority students. From the data it would appear that EOPS at Mendocino College has attended to the goal of minority recruitment with increasing success over the past five (5) years.

The Age distribution of EOPS students changed over the period of the study in a direction that more closely approximates the distribution of the total student population. Table 6 shows that in the earlier years, EOPS services were extended to a larger number of single female adults, often the single heads of households, returning to college after an extended absence from educational pursuits. More recent years have seen a decline among these participants, although it is anticipated that Welfare Reform may impact the program once again as new provisions apply to families previously receiving AFDC assistance. Over the span of the data, the proportion of Single Parent families declined from 55.82% to 37.63%. The proportion of single, independent students increase by nearly 8% over the time span of the study.

Table 7 shows the academic history of EOPS students prior to college enrollment. Very consistently, about 1/3 of the EOPS students either did not complete High School or completed it in non-traditional ways. Such students are considered in a "high risk" category for academic success. It is not uncommon for EOPS students who lack basic skills to spend their initial year of college preparing for university-parallel collegiate instruction.

Table 8 presents the income ranges for financial aid applicants, including EOPS. Dependent students - those living at home or receiving support from their families - are distributed across the spectrum of income ranges, about 1/3 in each of the major categories. There was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of low income dependent students. Independent students show incomes in much lower ranges, with over 70% in recent years falling below the $7,999 household figure for annual income, a statistically significant change.

Persistence and Performance of First-time EOPS Students: Fall, 1991 through Fall, 1995

How well do EOPS students succeed at Mendocino College? To gain an impression of student performance, the cohort of first-time EOPS students from five consecutive Fall semesters beginning in Fall, 1995 were followed for a minimum of six (6) semesters (N=540). As a matter of context, it is noted that EOPS students are generally required to be enrolled for 12 or more academic credits, although a number of awards equal to 10% of the previous year's total can be granted exceptions, including reducing the number of college units attempted.

Tables 9 and 10 show persistence and performance data for the first-time cohort. Cumulative records indicate that the cohort attempted the equivalent of nearly four (4) semesters of full-time credit during their enrollment at Mendocino College, with a very modest difference between cumulative units attempted and cumulative units completed. Only 4.07% of the total cohort failed to complete any college credit while enrolled. Over time, the average units attempted and completed declined among EOPS students at Mendocino College; however, it was found that over 35% of the total group had completed at least 60 units by the end of the investigation period. Although it is not shown numerically, the data indicate that about 20% were on academic probation status (< 2.00) at the end of their initial semester, as compared with about 30% of matriculants in the same time period. Given the high risk status of the EOPS population, it is a remarkable index of the program's effectiveness to report the levels of attainment achieved.

Tables 11 through 13 and the accompanying charts show the degree/certificate attainment of the first-time EOPS student cohort. Of course, the cohort includes continuing Mendocino College students who qualified after their initial EOPS eligibility. The data indicate that 157 of the 540 first-time EOPS students followed had received a degree or certificate from Mendocino College by the end of the 1997-98 academic year. EOPS program data show that a total of 76 present or former EOPS students received a degree or certificate in 1997, which was 36.5% of the total number of graduates. Assuming this pattern to be normative, it is clear that substantial numbers of EOPS students succeed in attaining their goals at Mendocino College. Nearly ¼ of the degree/certificate completers took six (6) semesters to attain their goals, with an additional 15% requiring longer than that. Just about 33% of the EOPS students completed a degree or certificate within four-semesters of their initial certification to participate in the EOPS program. Table 13 shows the array of field in which degrees or certificates were awarded. The largest cluster of EOPS Associate Degrees was in General Studies, a major which is often preparatory for transfer to the four-year college or university segment of higher education.

Factors Associated with Student Success:

Factors analyzed to measure their vale as predictors of student persistence and performance were Sex, Minority status, High School English and Mathematics levels completed (C or better), and the Computerized Placement Test (CPT) Reading score at entry. Of these factors, the verbal competencies represented by the level of English completed in high school, coupled with assessed reading competency, were found to be significant factors predictive of persistence, as measured by cumulative units completed. Minority status, High School English level and CPT Reading score were found to be significant predictors of Degree-certificate attainment. As the percentage of minority students in EOPS increased, the degree attainment among minority EOPS students decreased. Overall, about 18% of the degree/certificate completers were minority students, as compared with about 35% minority students in the EOPS cohort.

Discussion:

This study presents a five-year pattern of data for the EOPS program at Mendocino College, with particular focus upon the persistence and performance of the Fall, 1995 cohort of EOPS students. Over time, the Program has accounted for a substantial proportion of Full-time student enrollment at Mendocino College, although the proportion declined significantly in the most recent academic year included in the study. The demographics of the Program indicate that an increasing number and proportion of minority students – particularly Hispanics - have been successfully recruited to Mendocino College because of the Program's presence. Over time, the demographics of the EOPS student population have come to resemble the overall student population more closely.

EOPS students are by definition "high risk." These students are supported not only by direct financial assistance, but by a number of peer and professional-led programs and services available on campus, most notably The Learning Center, the Re-Entry Program, and the specifically focused Ethnic student organizationand services of the College.

Persistence and performance of EOPS students, as reflected in the First-time Fall cohort of F91 to F95 (N=540), significantly exceeds expectations for a high risk group, with 29.07% attaining a degree or certificate by Spring, 1998. During the follow-up period, it was found that the EOPS students maintained steady full time enrollment and attained a GPA comparable to the overall pattern of all enrolled students. About 1/3 of the graduates receiving degrees or certificates from Mendocino College annually will potentially come from the ranks of the EOPS students.

Since its inception, the Mendocino College EOPS program has had a demonstrably beneficial impact on the diversity of students served. With the support services offered on campus, and the peer influence generated among EOPS participants, it has been found that achievement of educational goals among EOPS students compares very favorably to the anticipated level of completion for groups that would not be considered "high risk."

Table 1

EOPS Students by Award Category: Mendocino College
1991-92 through 1995-96

	Book Grants		Cash Grants		CARE* Awards		Total	Total Full	
	Students	%	Students	%	Students	%	Students	Full Time	% of Total
1991-92	0	0.00%	265	100.00%	40	15.09%	265	831	31.89%
1992-93	0	0.00%	250	100.00%	63	25.20%	250	888	28.15%
1993-94	0	0.00%	250	100.00%	71	28.40%	250	871	28.70%
1994-95	0	0.00%	268	100.00%	74	27.61%	268	888	30.18%
1995-96	0	0.00%	201	100.00%	71	35.32%	201	918	21.90%
Total:	0	0.00%	1234	100.00%	319	25.85%	1234	4396	28.07%

*Cooperative Agency Resources for Education program (included in Grant Counts)

Note: 91 -95 difference between proportions of CARE students is 20.23%; t=8.75; p. < .001
Note: 91 -95 difference between proportions of full-time students is 8.75%; t=8.; p. < .001

Table 2

EOPS Funds/ Applications Processed: Mendocino College
1991-92 through 1995-96

	Funds	Applications	Awards	% of Applications	Avg Award
1991-92	$244,782	860	300	34.88%	$815.94
1992-93	$257,665	981	327	33.33%	$787.97
1993-94	$248,660	944	348	36.86%	$714.54
1994-95	$232,543	1085	350	32.26%	$664.41
1995-96	$227,809	986	301	30.53%	$756.84
Total:	$966,677	3996	1326	33.18%	$729.02

Table 3

EOPS Students by Gender: Mendocino College
1991-92 through 1995-96

	Females		Males		
	Number	%	Number	%	Total
1991-92	226	75.33%	74	24.67%	300
1992-93	234	71.56%	93	28.44%	327
1993-94	234	67.24%	114	32.76%	348
1994-95	228	65.14%	122	34.86%	350
1995-96	210	69.77%	91	30.23%	301
Total	1132	69.62%	494	30.38%	1626

Note: Differences in proportion by gender is 5.56%; t=2.175; p. <.05

Table 4

EOPS Students by Race-Ethnicity: Mendocino College
1991-92 through 1995-96

	Nat Am	%	Hispan	%	White Non-Hisp	%	Af Am	%	Asian	%	Other	%	Total
1991-92	33	11.00%	40	13.33%	212	70.67%	6	2.00%	6	2.00%	3	1.00%	300
1992-93	44	13.46%	45	13.76%	222	67.89%	7	2.14%	5	1.53%	4	1.22%	327
1993-94	53	15.23%	41	11.78%	233	66.95%	14	4.02%	3	0.86%	4	1.15%	348
1994-95	40	11.43%	68	19.43%	218	62.29%	12	3.43%	6	1.71%	6	1.71%	350
1995-96	25	8.31%	62	20.60%	196	65.12%	8	2.66%	7	2.33%	3	1.00%	301
Total:	195	11.99%	256	15.74%	1081	66.48%	47	2.89%	27	1.66%	20	1.23%	1626

Note: Difference in proportion of Hispanic students is 7.27%; t=3.60; p. < .01

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Table 5

EOPS Students by Age Cluster: Mendocino College
1991-92 through 1995-96

	Under 18		18 - 24		25 - 35		36+		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Total
1991-92	3	1.00%	113	37.67%	104	34.67%	80	26.67%	300
1992-93	12	3.67%	134	40.98%	108	33.03%	73	22.32%	327
1993-94	8	2.30%	131	37.64%	123	35.34%	86	24.71%	348
1994-95	4	1.14%	152	43.43%	109	31.14%	85	24.29%	350
1995-96	9	2.99%	129	42.86%	87	28.90%	76	25.25%	301
Total	36	2.21%	659	40.53%	531	32.66%	400	24.60%	1626

Note: Difference in 25-35 year olds is 5.76%; t=2.046, p. < .05

Table 6

EOPS Students by Marital Status: Meadocino College
1991-92 through 1995-96

	Sing. W Parent		Sing. Indep		Married		Sing. Parent		Other		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Total
1991-92	40	13.70%	48	16.44%	41	14.04%	163	55.82%	8	2.74%	292
1992-93	57	18.33%	69	22.19%	39	12.54%	146	46.95%	16	5.14%	311
1993-94	64	19.05%	72	21.43%	58	17.26%	142	42.26%	12	3.57%	336
1994-95	57	17.01%	89	26.57%	58	17.31%	131	39.10%	15	4.48%	335
1995-96	55	19.16%	70	24.39%	54	18.82%	108	37.63%	14	4.88%	287
Totals:	273	17.49%	348	22.29%	250	16.02%	690	44.20%	65	4.16%	1561

Note: 91 -95 difference between Single Parent is - 18.19%; t=6.08; p. <.001
Note: 91 -95 difference between Single is 7.95%; t=3.56; p. <.001

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Table 7

EOPS Students by HS Grad Status: Mendocino College
1991-92 through 1995-96

	HS Grad		GED/Proficiency		Non-Grad		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Total
1991-92	189	63.00%	72	24.00%	39	13.00%	300
1992-93	210	64.22%	83	25.38%	34	10.40%	327
1993-94	229	65.80%	88	25.29%	31	8.91%	348
1994-95	227	64.86%	95	27.14%	28	8.00%	350
1995-96	204	67.77%	68	22.59%	29	9.63%	301
Total:	1059	65.13%	406	24.97%	161	9.90%	1626

Table 8

Income Range of Financial Aid Applicants
1991-92 through 1995-96

Dependent Students	< $8,999		$9 - 14999		$15-29999		$30 - 41999		$42000+	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1991-92	24	17.02%	35	24.82%	60	42.55%	13	9.22%	9	6.38%
1992-93	25	15.06%	32	19.28%	62	37.35%	31	18.67%	16	9.64%
1993-94	29	11.03%	55	20.91%	84	31.94%	48	18.25%	47	17.87%
1994-95	94	31.65%	23	7.74%	95	31.99%	46	15.49%	39	13.13%
1995-96	94	28.31%	14	4.22%	105	31.63%	71	21.39%	48	14.46%
Total:	266	22.19%	159	13.26%	406	33.86%	209	17.43%	159	13.26%

Note: 91 -95 difference between low income dependent students is 11.29%, t=3.500,p < .001

Independent Students	< $7,999		$8 - 14999		$15000+		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1991-92	229	47.31%	167	34.50%	88	18.18%	484
1992-93	249	52.64%	156	32.98%	68	14.38%	473
1993-94	252	45.90%	163	29.69%	134	24.41%	549
1994-95	465	74.76%	60	9.65%	97	15.59%	622
1995-96	421	70.40%	43	7.19%	134	22.41%	598
Total:	1616	59.28%	589	21.61%	521	19.11%	2726

Note: 91 - 95 difference between low income independent students is 23.09%, t=10.02, p. < .001

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Table 9

Cumulative Units Attempted, Completed and GPA
EOPS First Time Fall, 1991 to Fall, 1995

EOPS	N	Mean UA	Std Dev	Mean UC	Std Dev	Mean GPA	Std Dev
Fall, 1991	102	50.265	28.079	46.656	29.465	2.543	0.864
Fall, 1992	107	51.818	32.442	49.093	35.894	2.441	0.950
Fall, 1993	133	45.519	29.770	43.981	33.339	2.268	1.055
Fall, 1994	110	44.368	25.978	42.100	28.854	2.318	1.057
Fall, 1995	88	42.920	26.236	42.841	28.514	2.539	0.922
Total:	540	47.006	28.632	45.346	31.414	2.413	0.977

Table 10

Cumulative Units Completed by Range
EOPS First Time Fall, 1991 to Fall, 1995

Range	N	%
0 - 14*	110	20.370%
15 - 29	95	17.593%
30 - 44	78	14.444%
45 - 59	67	12.407%
60+	190	35.185%
Total	540	100.000%

*includes 22 with Zero Units Completed (4.074%)

Table 11

Degrees, Certificates Attained by EOPS Cohorts
First time Fall, 1991 to Fall, 1995

	AA,AS N	% of Total	Certificate N	% of Total	Total N	% of Total	Total Cohort N	%
Fall, 1991	24	23.53%	9	8.82%	33	32.35%	102	100.00%
Fall, 1992	27	25.23%	8	7.48%	35	32.71%	107	100.00%
Fall, 1993	34	25.56%	7	5.26%	41	30.83%	133	100.00%
Fall, 1994	15	13.64%	10	9.09%	25	22.73%	110	100.00%
Fall, 1995	12	13.64%	11	12.50%	23	26.14%	88	100.00%
Total	112	20.74%	45	8.33%	157	29.07%	540	100.00%

Table 12

Length of Time to Attain Degree/ Certificate
First Time EOPS Fall, 1991 to Fall, 1995

	AA,AS N	%	Certificate N	%	Total N	
One Year	19	12.10%	9	5.73%	28	17.83%
Two Years	31	19.75%	16	10.19%	47	29.94%
Three Years	39	24.84%	11	7.01%	50	31.85%
Four Years	13	8.28%	3	1.91%	16	10.19%
Five Years	5	3.18%	3	1.91%	8	5.10%
Over 5 Years	2	1.27%	1	0.64%	3	1.91%
Other	3	1.91%	2	1.27%	5	3.18%
Total	112	71.34%	45	28.66%	157	100.00%

Table 13

Field of Degree/ Certificate Awarded
EOPS First Time Fall 91 to Fall 95

	AA,AS		Certificates		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Admin of Justice	1	0.64%	0	0.00%	1	0.64%
Agri: Landscape Mainten.	0	0.00%	1	0.64%	1	0.64%
Agri: Orn Horticulture	4	2.55%	0	0.00%	4	2.55%
Alcohol and Oth Drug	6	3.82%	1	0.64%	7	4.46%
Automotive Tech/Tune-up	0	0.00%	7	4.46%	7	4.46%
Biological Science	2	1.27%	0	0.00%	2	1.27%
Bus. Administration	2	1.27%	0	0.00%	2	1.27%
Bus: Accounting	9	5.73%	11	7.01%	20	12.74%
Bus: Small Bus Mgt.	4	2.55%	2	1.27%	6	3.82%
Bus Off Tech: Admin Asst./Sec.	7	4.46%	0	0.00%	7	4.46%
Bus Off Tech: Sec. Sci.	0	0.00%	11	7.01%	11	7.01%
Ceramics Master Tech	0	0.00%	2	1.27%	2	1.27%
Computer and Inf Sci	3	1.91%	5	3.18%	8	5.10%
Electronics and E. Tech	1	0.64%	1	0.64%	2	1.27%
Fam Rel Child Dev	10	6.37%	4	2.55%	14	8.92%
Gen Studies	33	21.02%	0	0.00%	33	21.02%
Health Sci: Haz Materials	1	0.64%	0	0.00%	1	0.64%
Health Services	3	1.91%	0	0.00%	3	1.91%
Lib Arts	20	12.74%	0	0.00%	20	12.74%
Mathematics	1	0.64%	0	0.00%	1	0.64%
Psychology	1	0.64%	0	0.00%	1	0.64%
Soc Science	1	0.64%	0	0.00%	1	0.64%
Spanish	2	1.27%	0	0.00%	2	1.27%
Speech	1	0.64%	0	0.00%	1	0.64%
Total	112	71.34%	45	28.66%	157	100.00%

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Table 14

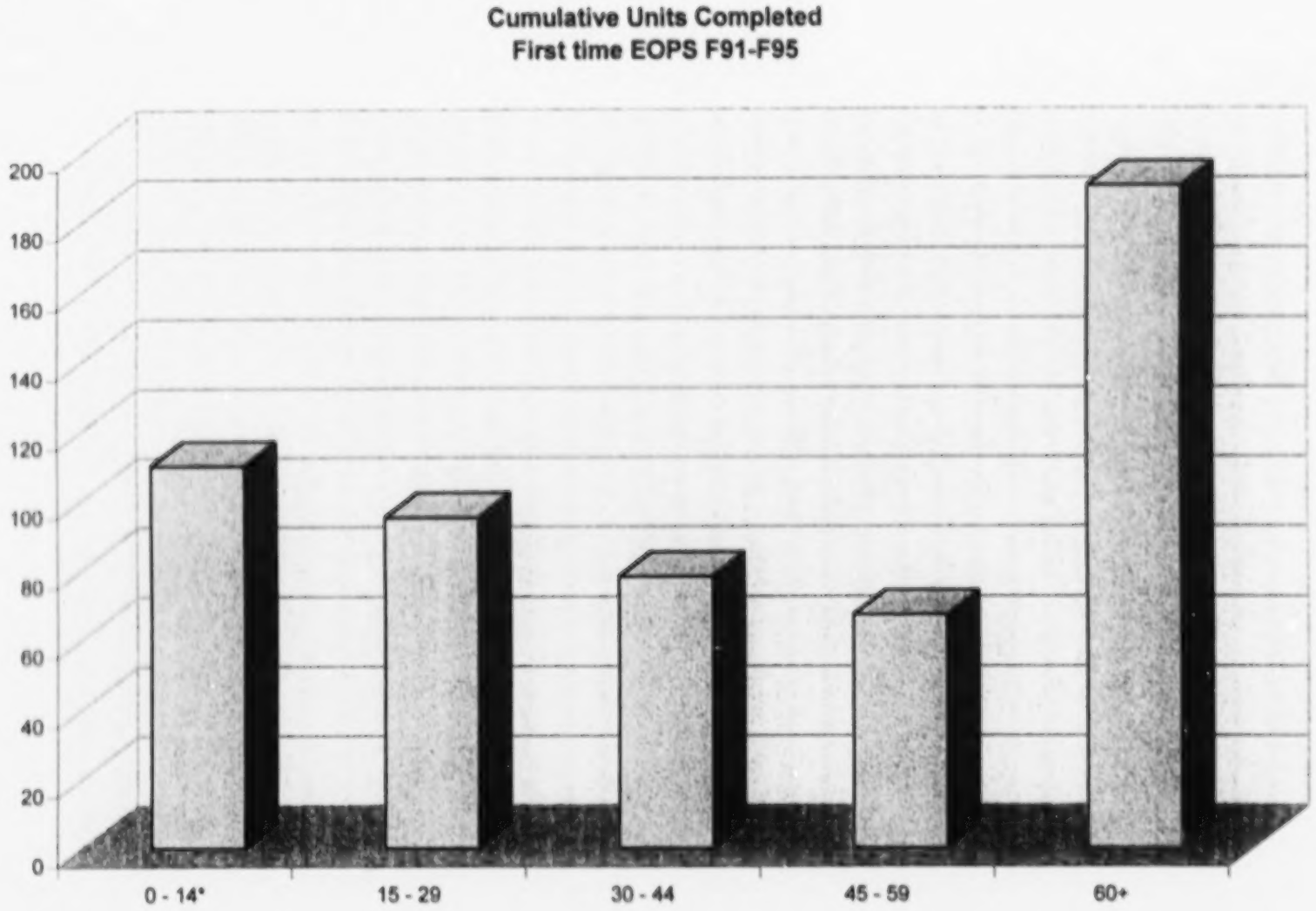
Factors Associated with Persistence (Units Completed)
First time EOPS Students Fall 1991-Fall 1995

	DF	F-Value	p. <	
Sex	1,538	1.7	0.1928	n.s.
Minority Status	1,538	0.854	0.3559	n.s.
HS English Level	5,428	2.412	0.0357	
HS Math Level	6,451	1.754	0.1069	n.s.
CPT Reading	1,482	10.093	0.0016	

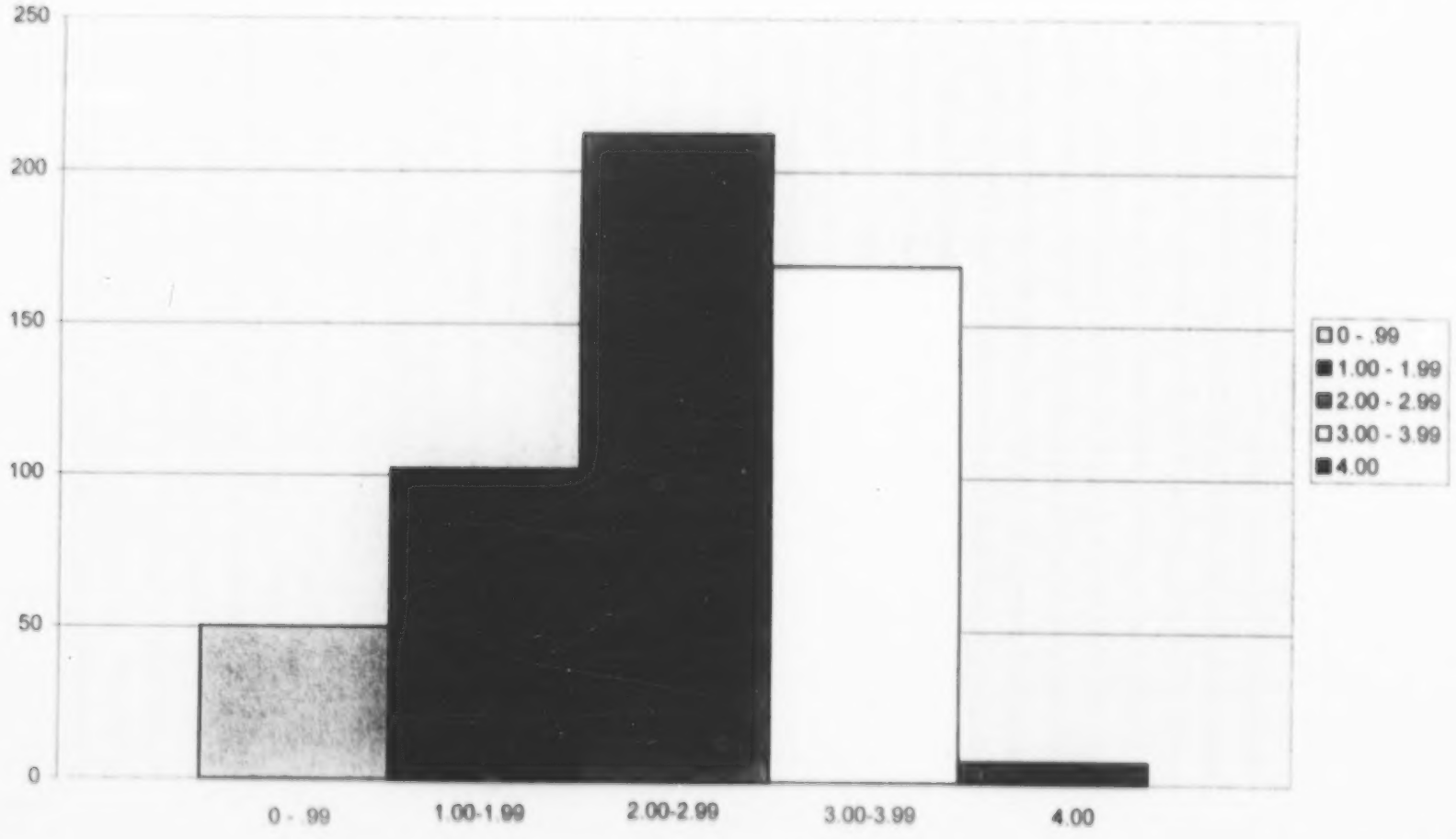
Table 15

Factors Associated with Performance (Degree/CertificateCompleted)
First time EOPS Students Fall 1991-Fall 1995

	DF	F-Value	p. <	
Sex	1,538	1.784	0.1822	n.s.
Minority Status	1,538	13.785	0.0002	
HS English Level	5,428	2.297	0.0444	
HS Math Level	6,451	1.754	0.1069	n.s.
CPT Reading	1,482	16.095	0.0001	


Cumulative Units Completed
First time EOPS F91-F95
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
0 - 14*
15 - 29
30 - 44
45 - 59
60+

Cumulative GPA Attained
First time EOPS F91 - F95



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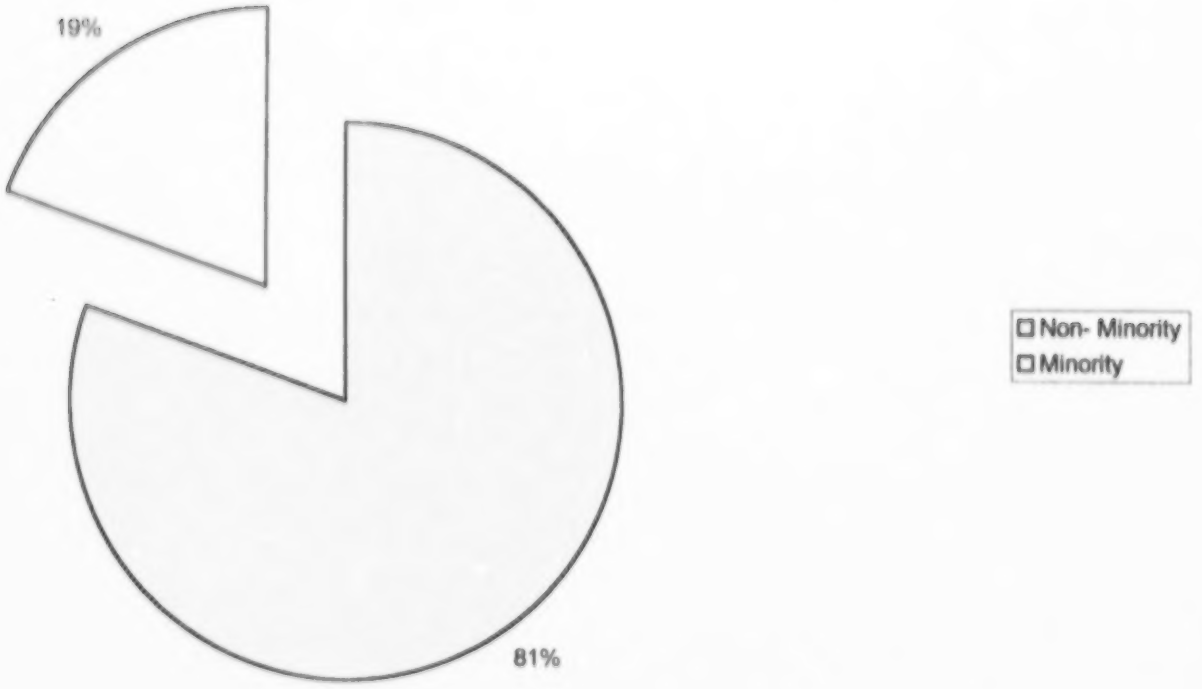
Type of Award Earned
First time EOPS F91-F95

Degrees and Certificates Awarded
First time EOPS F91 - F95



Length of Time to Complete Degree/Certificate
First time EOPS F91-F95